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JANUARY 1985

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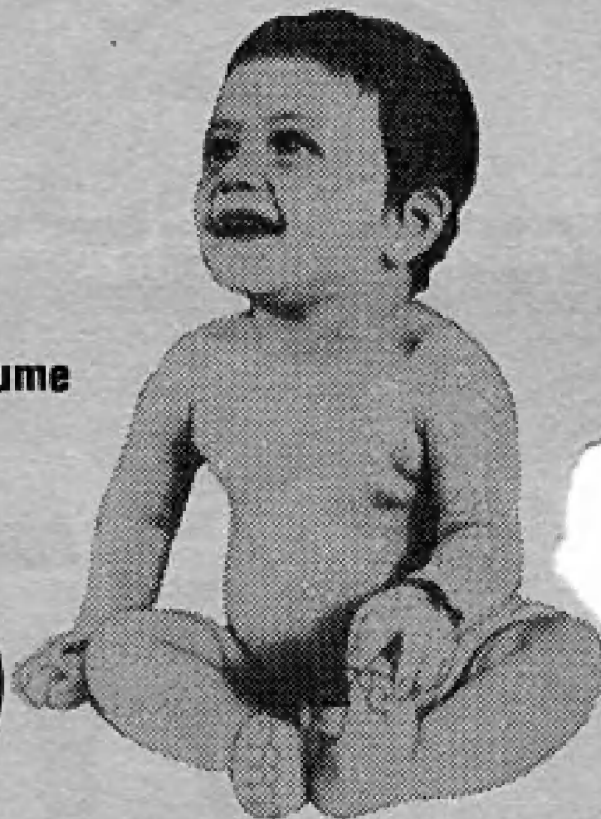
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From the publishers of Chandamama

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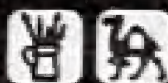
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- \* *A Demon in the Battle — in the Story of Krishna*
- \* *The Story of River Kaveri — through pictures*
- \* *Legends of India, A Tale from the Arabian Nights, Laugh with Nasruddin, Towards a Better English*
- \* *A bunch of absorbing stories*
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### Thoughts to be Treasured

**"When need is one, and hope is one, when fear is one, and love is one, how are men to dream long that there are barriers dividing them?"**

**"The scales have fallen from our eyes, and we see and know that we are one." —Sister Nivedita**

Printed by B.V. REDDI at Prasad Process Private Ltd. and published by B. VISWANATHA REDDI for CHANDAMAMA CHILDREN'S TRUST FUND (Prop. of Chandamama Publications), 188 Arcot Road, Madras-600 026 (India).

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**AND Newflash, Do You Know, Let Us Know and More!**





# CHANDAMAMA

Controlling Editor: NAGI REDDI

Founder: CHAKRAPANI

## GREETINGS

Have you ever peeped into a Post Office, on the eve of a New Year, and seen the heaps of greeting cards being stamped? They go in and arrive from many directions. They are colourful, beautiful.

But the real colour and beauty, of course, are to be sought elsewhere—in the hearts of man; the cards are only symbols.

One man is different from another. But still we are all one in certain goals of our life. For example, is there anybody who *does not* want to be happy? No doubt, the meaning of *happiness* differs from section to section of people. Comforts of life mean happiness to some; to some others sacrifice of comforts for a cause means happiness; there are still others whose happiness lies in knowing the Truth or God.

Thus, we are one in our aim. Today or tomorrow everyone has to realise that one cannot be really happy without love for and sympathy with others. Let us—you and Chandamama—strive to give this idea to all! Happy New Year to you!

## GOLDEN WORDS OF YORE

किं करोत्येव पाण्डित्यमस्थाने विनियोजितम् ।

अन्धकारप्रतिच्छन्ने घटे दीप इवाहितः ॥

*Kim karotyeva pāndityamasthāne viniyojitam*

*Andhakārapratichchanne ghaṭe dīpa ivāhitaḥ*

What is the use of trying to apply learning at the wrong place ? That will be like trying to remove darkness through a lamp which is placed in a closed pot.

— *The Panchatantram*



# NEWS - FLASH



## A Diamond named Indira

A grand piece of diamond, found recently in the Soviet Union, has been christened **INDIRA** in honour of the martyred Prime Minister of India. The diamond will be kept in the Kremlin.

## India and Africa

In an article in the British magazine *Science*, geologist Dr. Ashok Sahani of the University of Punjab says that millions of years ago no ocean separated India from Africa. All they had between them was a kind of corridor across which the giant reptiles could freely move.



## Sleep on the Left Side

According to the ancient Indian *Swaradayo Yoga* or science of breathing one should sleep on one's left side for the greater part of the night. Scientists have recently said that to sleep on the right side is not good, for one gets nightmares!

## The Flying Train

Trains of the future will not run on rails, but will float four inches off the ground on a magnetic field cushion. They will be pulled forward by nuggets—at a speed of nearly 500 Km. The new technology is being developed by Japan and West Germany.





# Gita

—By Manoj Das

*(As all the efforts to persuade the Kauravas to concede to the legitimate and humble demands of the Pandavas failed, both the camps gathered at Kurukshetra for trial of strength. Arjuna felt remorseful; at that Krishna revealed to him the secret of doing Yoga amidst the activities of life. His words are famous as the Gita.)*

## THE GREAT MAHABHARATA WAR

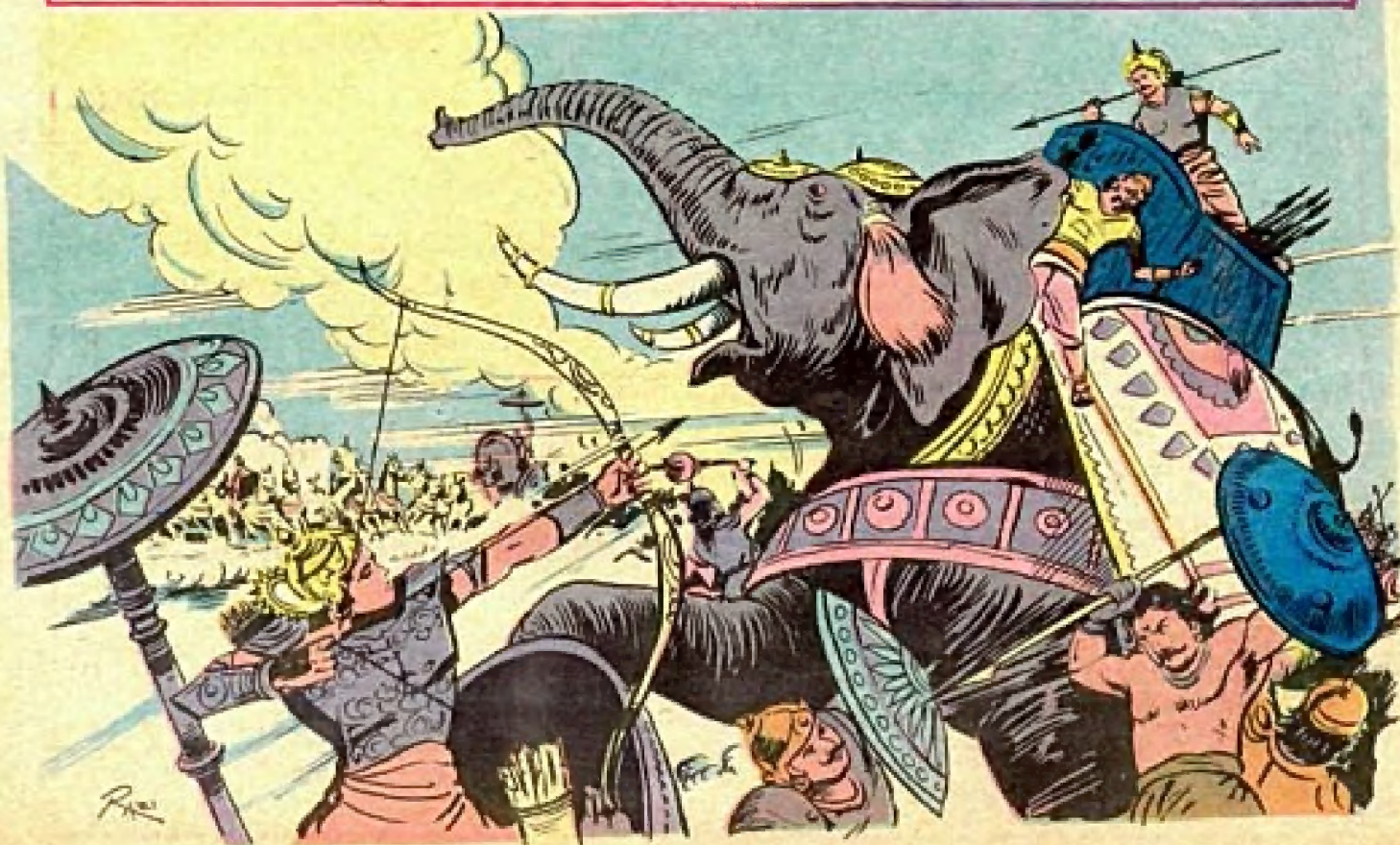
The war began with Bhima at the forefront of the Pandavas and Bhishma leading the Kauravas. Illustrious kings and renowned warriors, in their hundreds, had aligned themselves with either the Kauravas or the Pandavas. They had come with tens of thousands of their soldiers.

The general tendency was for

the kings and the generals of one camp to fight the kings and the generals of equal status belonging to the opposing camp.

Soon the battle assumed terrifying proportions. The sound of drums, bugles and other instruments was often surpassed by shouts and exclamations of those locked in the fight.

The war continued for eight-







een days. Countless soldiers and their elephants and horses fell every day. Although at the beginning the fight used to be called off at the sunset, the rule was waived towards the later phase of the war as each camp grew anxious to finish off the other at the earliest.

The major weapons used were bows and arrows, swords, spears and mace. But so far as the heroes were concerned, they used these weapons only as external means; what they fought with were supernatural powers through penance. They used such powers through their arrows. Two arrows could look

alike, but they could be quite different in their effectiveness.

With incredible swiftness Krishna drove Arjuna through the battlefield. Arjuna had nothing to bother about his own movement. His charioteer knew better than him. The chariot glided from spot to spot, from one strategy to another, to Arjuna's best advantage.

For the Kauravas, Krishna driving the chariot and Arjuna shooting arrows became an awful sight. The soldiers panicked and fled from the chariot's passage, instead of blocking it. Some of the Kaurava generals thought that the wisest thing for them would be to deprive Arjuna of Krishna's guidance. That could be achieved if Krishna was killed. At least one of the generals, King Shrutayudha, who held a mighty mace, tried to achieve this end. Forgetting that it was treacherous to kill a charioteer who was unarmed, he hurled his mace at Krishna.

The dazzling object came swirling towards Krishna at great speed but, without touching Krishna physically, suddenly bounced back at a greater speed and hit the one who sent it.



King Shrutayudha lay dead.

Krishna brought Arjuna face to face with Bhishma. Although Arjuna did his best to kill Bhishma, the grand old man never directed any weapon straight at Arjuna, for he had decided not to kill any of the Pandava brothers. However, the ease and swiftness with which Bhishma went on destroying the armies fighting for the Pandavas was alarming. At one point it appeared that before long the Kauravas would steal a comfortable march on the Pandavas.

Krishna appeared to forget that he was participating in the war only as a charioteer and not as a general. He jumped down

from the chariot. Instantly his wondrous weapon, *Sudarsana*, appeared in his hand.

The sight immensely pleased Bhishma. "Come on, Krishna, let's fight. There could be nothing happier for me than dying in your hands," he exclaimed.

But Arjuna ran forward and took hold of Krishna. Krishna remembered of his announcement not to fight himself and also of Arjuna's vow to kill Bhishma. He recovered his poise and returned to his seat in the chariot.

However, at every step Krishna's help paved for the Pandavas their way to victory. The supporters of the Kauravas were







a determined lot. Also the able generals on their side outnumbered those on the Pandava side. The great Bhishma apart, there were Drona who had taught martial art to both the groups of princes, the intelligent and daring Karna, Shalva the mighty king of Madra and the audacious Jayadratha, the king of Sindhu, with the Kauravas.

The last-named ally of the Kauravas, Jayadratha, was as powerful as he was brutish. Once, when the Pandavas were living in exile in the forest, he found Draupadi alone and dragged her away. Luckily the Pandavas were back before it was

too late. Bhima and Arjuna pursued the kidnapper and caught up with him. Bhima would have killed him, but for the kind-hearted Yudhisthira's intervention. Jayadratha was released, but only after Bhima had shorn him of the hair and blackened his face.

Jayadratha could not forget the humiliation. He joined the Kauravas. On the thirteenth day of the war, the prominent ones among the Kaurava generals, Drona, Aswasthama, Kripa and Karna, conspired to kill Arjuna's teen-age son, the brave Abhimanyu. That was a cruel and brutal act indeed—so many senior warriors pouncing upon a mere boy. But Abhimanyu, surprisingly, proved more than a match for all of them put together. He had been entrapped by them. Only if some help from the Pandava heroes could have reached him, he would have come out of his predicament, putting his foes to shame. But it was Jayadratha who guarded the entrance of the human trap. He kept Yudhisthira and Bhima at bay. Indeed, he could not check gloating over Abhimanyu's predicament.

Abhimanyu fought on with



supreme valour. When all his weapons were gone, and his chariot damaged, he picked a wheel and defended himself with it. At last, however, the Kaurava generals succeeded in killing him.

The Pandavas were plunged into a terrible depression. When Arjuna emerged out of that state, he was the personification of wrath. "Either I kill Jayadratha before the sunset tomorrow, or I throw myself into fire!" he announced in a thunderous voice.

Arjuna's vow shook the Kaurava camp—Jayadratha in particular. He was assured by Duryodhana and Drona that

they will never allow Arjuna to come near him.

And, the next day, they kept Jayadratha safe inside a circle of the ablest warriors and themselves stood guard round the circle. Arjuna broke forth upon them like a cyclone. He tried to dash through the cordon, but that was not easy. The Kauravas did their utmost to check Arjuna from reaching Jayadratha for a reason greater than merely protecting their friend. They knew that Arjuna would never violate a vow. If Jayadratha can remain safe till the sundown, then Arjuna would jump into fire and die. That would be the biggest gain for the Kauravas.





The distance between the sun and the horizon was narrowing. Arjuna was looking desperate while the Kauravas were feeling bright! Every minute that passed made these two different reactions in the two camps more and more vivid.

The moment had arrived when Krishna must act—if the ultimate triumph of good over evil is to be ensured.

While the Kauravas were engrossed in fight, the sky grew dark. When they woke up to it, they could hardly suppress their glee. "The sun has set and Arjuna must sacrifice himself!" they shouted. Jayadratha began to laugh lustily like a demon, looking at the sky.

But suddenly the duskiness passed and the drooping sun was visible on the horizon.

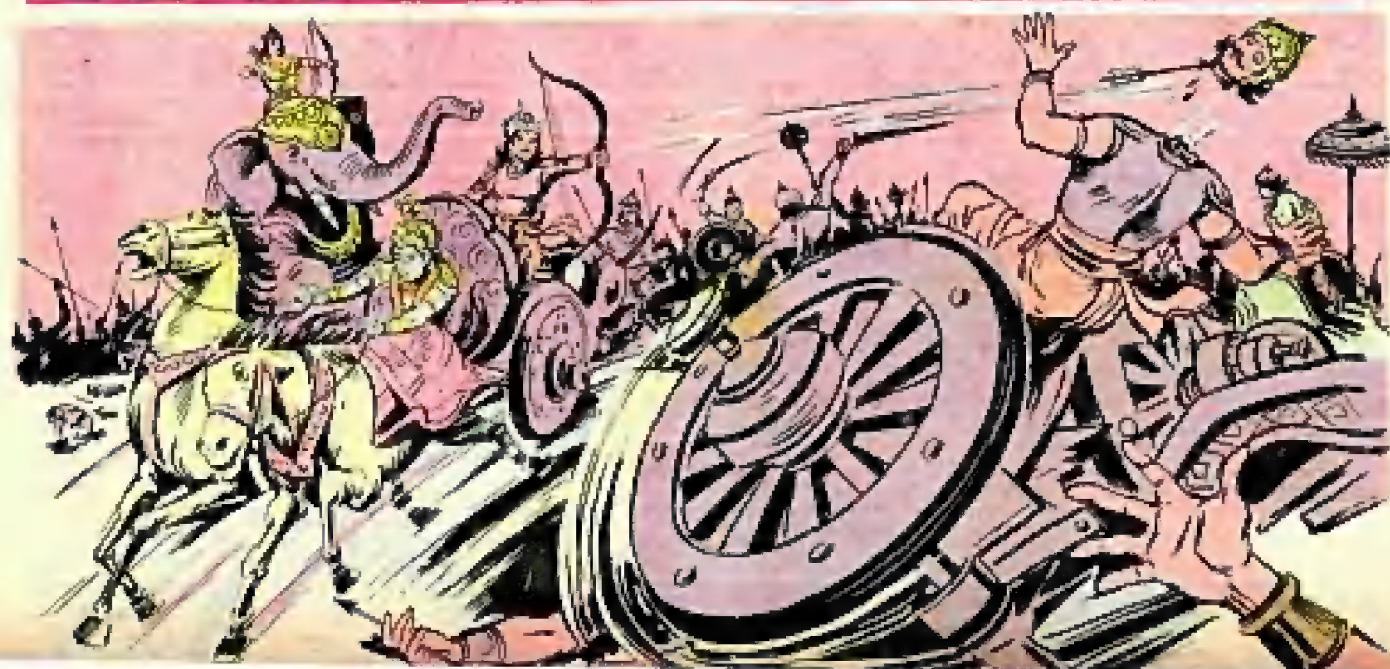
Arjuna had raised his bow

and the arrow was about to fly. But Krishna warned him of another grave danger. According to a boon which Jayadratha's father had obtained for Jayadratha, one who would throw the latter's head on the ground would lose his own head immediately.

Krishna told Arjuna what he should do. Arjuna's arrow whizzed past Jayadratha's guards and cut off his head. It did something spectacular thereafter. It carried the head at lightning speed into a faraway forest where Jayadratha's father sat in solitude. The head fell on his lap. Taken aback and without knowing what it is, he stood up to throw off the object.

Jayadratha's head fell on the ground. As a result, the old man's head rolled off too!

*To Continue*





## A Wise Judge

Once upon a time there was a king. In one of his towns he had posted a judge. People spoke very high of the judge. "No rogue can ever escape punishment and never an innocent can be victimised in his court," they said.

The king decided to see the judge when he was holding court. He set out on horseback in the disguise of a merchant.

Upon reaching the town he rested for a while in an inn.

When he was about to mount

his horse, a tired and haggard looking man approached him and said, "Sir! I am a weary traveller. My horse died on the way. Will you please allow me to ride with you as far as the market square, where I can buy a horse?"

"Why not!" said the disguised king taking pity on the traveller. He made the traveller sit behind him and rode on. When they reached the market square, the merchant brought his horse to a halt and asked the traveller to





dismount.

The fellow, who was a rogue, shouted at the top of his voice: "What? Must you try to cheat me? Is this the reward I deserve for helping you reach this place?"

The merchant stood stunned. Meanwhile a crowd had collected.

The rogue told the crowd: "This horse is mine. I carried this gentleman from the suburb to the market square. Now, look at his knavery! He refuses to dismount!"

The king stood still stupefied over the cunningness of the traveller. Someone in the crowd proposed, "Why not go to our

wise judge?"

The merchant and the traveller went to the court.

There were other complainants there and the judge called them one by one. Before he took up the case of the merchant and the traveller, he heard a butcher and an oil merchant.

The butcher held a bagful of money in his hand, and the oil merchant held the butcher's hand in his grip.

"This butcher came to my shop and asked to change a gold coin for him. When I opened my money-bag he snatched it and began to run away. But I pursued him and caught him, as you





see, my lord, and brought him here."

"Don't believe this man, my lord. He is a liar. He came to my shop in order to buy meat and asked me if I could give him change for a gold coin. When I took out my money-bag, he seized it and tried to run away. But I was alert. I caught hold of him," said the butcher.

"Give that bag of money to me," said the judge.

When the bag changed hands, the judge ordered his attendant to bring a bucket, half-filled with water. When the bucket was brought, the judge emptied the money-bag into it.

Seconds later blobs of oil

emerged to the surface of the water.

"The one who has collected the coins deals in oil. Hence the bag belongs to the oil-merchant. It should go to him. What should go to the butcher? A hundred strokes by an oily cane," said the judge.

The oil merchant went away with his money, thanking the judge. The butcher was dragged away to receive his punishment.

Then the judge called the disguised king and the rogue.

The traveller began first. When he finished, the merchant gave his version of the case. The judge listened to them intently. He then ordered his servant to





lead the horse to the stable of a rich landlord.

"Would you be able to recognize your horse when it is amidst other horses?" he asked the merchant.

"Certainly," replied the merchant.

"And you?" He asked the rogue.

"I won't fail to recognise it my lord, since the horse is mine!" asserted the rogue.

The judge then led them to the stable. There were more than twenty-five horses.

First the merchant was asked to point out the horse in question. He instantly did it. The rogue too pointed out the horse without any difficulty.

The judge then returned to

his court and his judgment ran thus: "Though the merchant and the traveller pointed out the same horse, the horse certainly belongs to the merchant. When he approached the horse, it turned its head and stretched its neck towards him. That is how horses behave with those familiar to them. But when the traveller approached the same horse it turned back its ears and lifted one hoof. That is how they behave with strangers. Hence the merchant will get back his horse and the traveller shall get a sentence of six months in jail."

The king was immensely pleased with the wisdom and intelligence of the judge. He revealed his identity to him and made him his minister.

—Retold by P. Raja





# Treasure Island

After a series of adventures on Treasure Island, young Jim Hawkins has fallen into the hands of Long John Silver, who has led a mutiny on board the *Hispaniola*, the vessel which has brought Jim, Squire Trelawney and Dr. Livesey to the island in search of treasure. Because Silver has been protective towards Jim, Silver's band of cut-throats turn against him.



"What I can do, I'll do," I told him. The council of the mutineers lasted a long time, but at last they came out. One of them came forward and silently pressed a piece of paper into Long John's hand. Looking down at what had been given him, he cried: "The black spot!"



Silver turned over the black piece of paper which had been handed to him. On it was the word, 'DEPOSED'. "You fools," roared Silver. "You'd depose me, who was given *this* by the doctor!" And he cast down a paper which I recognised as the chart I had found. Why the doctor had given it to him, I could not think. The mutineers jumped on it like cats on a mouse.

The sailors were overjoyed by the map. "Silver for ever! Silver for captain!" they cried. That was the end of the night's business, and we lay down to sleep. But I lay awake for a long time thinking of the game Silver was playing—keeping the mutineers together, while looking after himself. Surprisingly, considering all, he slept peacefully.







We were all awakened by a voice hailing us outside the stockade. "Here's the doctor," it cried. I went outside to find Silver standing at the gate with Dr. Livesey. "As you see," Silver said, beaming, "we have a little stranger here—a new board and lodger, sir, looking tit and taut as a fiddle."

Leaving us, Silver sat down on a tree stump. Alone with the doctor I described my adventures. "There's a kind of fate in this," he observed when I had done. "Every step you've saved our lives."



He led me back to Silver, who rose eagerly to greet us. "Silver," said the doctor, "I'll give you a piece of advice. Don't be in any great hurry to find that treasure." "I must," said Silver. "I can only save my life and the boy's by seeking that treasure."





The doctor then shook hands with me and set off at a brisk pace for the woods. "Jim," said Silver, when we were alone. "Now it's time for us to go in for this here treasure hunting." You can imagine how uneasy was my heart when I set off with my captors on our quest.



We straggled down to the beach, where two boats awaited us. We clambered into them, and disembarked from them finally at the mouth of the river. Soon afterwards at the foot of a big pine we came across a human skeleton. "I've got a notion in my old numbskull," said Silver, after he had stared at the skeleton for some time.



"Take a bearing along them line of bones," said Silver. A bearing was taken in the direction indicated by the skeleton and the compass duly read: E.S.E. and by E. "I thought so," said Silver. "This here is a pointer. Right up there is our line for the gold. This is one of Flint's jokes using one of the men he killed for a compass..."





It was at that point a high trembling voice struck up. "Fifteen men on the dead man's chest—yo-ho-ho, and a bottle of rum!" "It's the ghost of captain Flint!" cried one of the mutineers.

"Shipmates," Silver cried, "I'll not be beaten by man or devil. I never feared Flint in his life, and by the powers, I'll face him dead. There's a treasure to be found hereabouts and I aim to lay my hands on it."



Silver led the way through the undergrowth until suddenly he came to a dead halt. Before us was a great excavation, not very recent, for the sides had fallen in and grass sprouted at the bottom. More to the point, it was empty!

—To Continue



## STRANGE STORY OF A YOUNG MAN

**"M**y lord, strange things do happen to men—sometimes so strange that one who has not experienced them would not believe them!" said Sidi Numan. He was narrating his story to the great Harun-al-Rashid, the Caliph of Bagdad.

Sidi Numan went on narrating his strange experience:

He married a young lady who was exceedingly beautiful. This he did without enquiring into her background—and against the wish of his own folk.

He rented a mansion and went to live with his wife. The first day was spent well. But, to his surprise, he saw that his wife was eating very little. In fact, instead of eating Pilau in spoonfuls or handfuls, she picked up one grain at a time!

Pleadings from Numan that she should eat well went unheeded by her. When she continued with her practice for days together, and still did not seem to be growing weak or lean, Numan became suspicious. Was



she eating something hiding from him? But why should she do that?

One night he kept awake while pretending to fall asleep. At midnight he observed the lady slowly leaving her bed. She did so with utmost caution so that her movement did not disturb her husband in the least.

She walked out of the house. Numan followed her tiptoe. Through the darkness she headed towards the cemetery outside the town. From distance Numan saw a ghoul seated on a broken wall, signalling to her. She looked happy. As she reached the wall, the ghoul lent





her his hand and lifted her up the wall. Then both disappeared on the other side of the wall.

Numan was shocked and stunned. His wife and the ghou must be having food together. What sort of food? Numan shuddered to give it any thought.

He returned home and pretended to fall asleep. After an hour the lady was back.

Numan kept on worrying over the problem. A good man that he was, he decided to do his best to reform his wife.

In the morning, when they sat for breakfast, he politely said, "My wife, I have enough money

to buy you any kind of food. Must you walk up to the cemetery at midnight?"

The situation changed in a second. The lady's eyes spouted fire of anger. She looked wild. Once she was sure that Numan had come to know of her secret, all her pretensions to gentleness was gone. She picked up a tumbler that contained water, muttered some words of black magic and emptied the tumbler on Numan.

At once Numan changed into a dog!

He tried to escape. As he was passing through the door, the lady pulled the door in such a way that the dog would be squeezed to death. However, the dog managed to escape, losing the end of its tail.

Numan ran for his life. He escaped from the dangerous lady, but landed himself in an unexpected difficulty: the street dogs began to chase him.

He entered a grocer's shop. The grocer was a kind-hearted man. He drove away the street-dogs and let Numan take shelter under a rack. Very soon Numan, through his look and swaying of the tail, won the grocer's heart.



One day a lady paid the grocer some coins in payment for the stuff she bought. The grocer returned one of the coins, saying that that was a counterfeit one. The lady protested vehemently. The annoyed grocer said, "Even my dog can find out that this one is a bad coin!"

"Is that so?" reacted the lady angrily and she scattered the handful of coins on the floor. To her great surprise, the dog gathered the coins by the help of its paws, but ignored the bad one.

It was no less surprising for the grocer! He proudly announced of his dog's special quality before the other shopkeepers. Many of them, out of curiosity, mixed counterfeit coins with genuine coins and brought them to the dog. Numan applied his human intelligence and shifted the counterfeit coins!

One afternoon when the grocer was busy receiving some parcels for his shop, an old woman beckoned Numan to follow her. Numan felt that the woman had some good intention. In any case, nobody could do any worse to him after he had been reduced to a dog!



He followed the woman to her house. "My daughter!" shouted the woman inside the house, "Whoever had heard of a dog shifting counterfeit coins from real ones! I've a hunch that some witch or wizard has changed a human being into a dog. Will you please examine this creature?"

A young lady came out of another room and looked at the dog. Numan swung his tail rapidly and growled softly and rolled at the young lady's feet. He tried his best to show that what the old woman said was right.

The young lady fetched some



water and chanted some abracadabra and said, "If it is a dog by birth, let it remain a dog, but if it is a human being, let it return to its true form! Then she threw the water on Numan.

Lo and behold! Numan got his human form. He burst into tears of joy and gratefulness and narrated his misfortune to the young lady. The young lady was well-versed in magic but she applied her knowledge only for the welfare of others. She was moved to pity. She gave some magic water to Numan and told him what he should do.

Numan proceeded to his home. The witch who had beguiled him into marriage with her, was not at home. He waited. Soon the lady entered the house. Her face turned pale at the sight of Numan. She tried

to get hold of some water or dust to apply her magic on Numan through it, but before she had succeeded in doing so, Numan splashed the magic water he had brought at her.

At once she turned into a mare. Numan tied her to a pole in his stable where she was when Caliph Harun-al-Rashid heard the story.

"We better seek the help of that good young lady and bring the witch back to her human form," said the Caliph.

"If you so please, my lord!" said Numan.

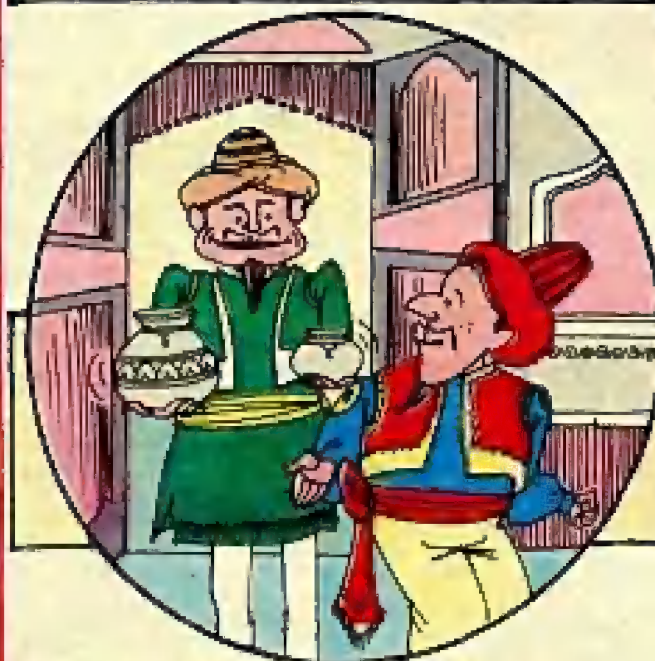
"Let us wait, let us see what the good young lady says. Only if we are sure that the witch cannot do more mischief we should change her, not otherwise," said the Caliph.





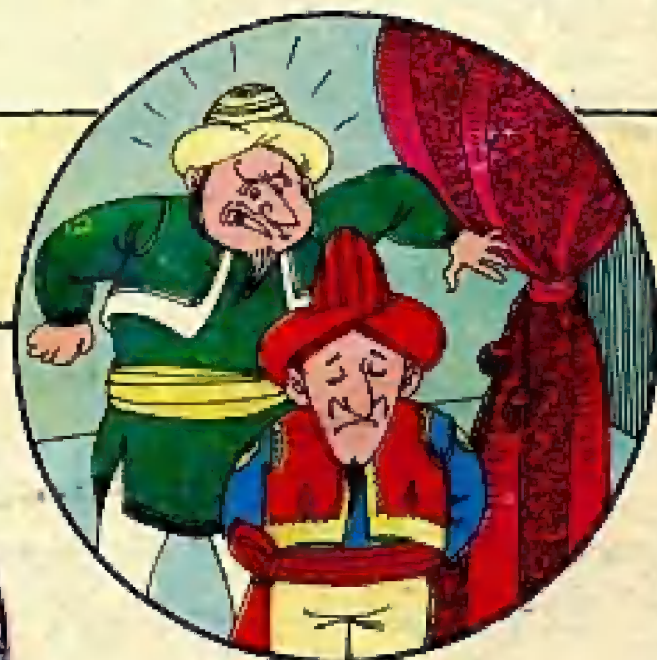
## A POTFUL OF WIT

Mulla Nasruddin had a neighbour who was naughty and greedy. One evening when the Mulla borrowed a pot from him, he demanded a coin for it.



In the morning the Mulla returned the pot and paid the coin. But inside the pot was a tiny pot. "At night your pot must have given birth to this one," said the Mulla.

Some days later the Mulla borrowed the pot once again. But next day he informed his neighbour that the pot died at night! "Can a pot die?" asked the angry neighbour. The Mulla said nothing.



The neighbour complained before the elders. Explained the Mulla. "If my friend never doubted my statement that his pot gave birth to another pot, why should he doubt that the pot could also die?"



## TWO PREDICTIONS



**T**wo friends, Vipul and Vijan, lost their way while crossing a forest. They feared attack from wild beasts and bandits. Quite scared, they looked for some shelter.

Luckily, they spotted a beam of fire behind a thicket. They went in that direction and saw a hut. It was situated near a murmuring brook. The atmosphere was filled with the fragrance of sandalwood and Tulsi leaves.

Looking into the hut the two friends saw a bearded old man seated in meditation. They had heard of a hermit living in the forest. The hermit could predict things accurately. He could also

do many other marvellous things.

The two friends were sure that the old man they saw was none other than the hermit. Fear left them, for they knew that no wild beast or bandit can harm them in the hermit's presence.

They coughed and drew the hermit's attention to them. When the hermit looked at them, they prostrated themselves to him.

"Why are you here?" asked the hermit.

"We lost our way in the forest, O holy one," they said. "Won't you allow us to pass the night in your hut?"

"Gladly."

The hermit gave them fruits to eat and milk to drink. In the morning they stood before the hermit with folded hands. "Sir, we know of your great capacity for reading the future. Kindly tell us what is in store for us."

"I avoid meeting people because they pester me with such



queries. I don't like to make predictions," said the hermit.

But the young men won't leave him in peace. Looking at Vipul for a moment, the hermit said, "You shall become a king in a year." Looking at Vijan, he said, "You shall die in the hands of an assassin in a year."

The two friends bowed to him and took leave of him.

Once outside the forest, Vipul began almost dancing with joy. But Vijan grew gloomy. That was only natural.

When they were back in their town, Vipul behaved very proudly and arrogantly. "I will behead you when I become a king!" he threatened those with whom he got annoyed. People who heard that the hermit had predicted of his becoming a king, were afraid of retorting him.

Vijan spent his time in prayers. When he was not praying, he was serving the people around him.

Six months passed. One evening Vipul called Vijan and said, "Dear friend, I am out to select a site for my future palace. Won't you help me with the selection?"

Vijan accompanied Vipul.



Both were surveying a deserted field when Vipul stumbled upon a half-buried pot. He dug it out and removed its lid and saw that it contained gold and silver. "My luck has just begun to bloom!" he exclaimed. "Now I must use this money to prepare to receive the crown that is coming to me."

He had just finished saying so when a bandit jumped out of a bush and tried to snatch the pot. When Vijan came to his friend's rescue, the bandit attacked him with a dagger. But Vijan was stronger than the bandit and he also knew the tricks of defence. He gave a lightning punch to the



bandit. The dagger fell off the bandit's hand, though Vijan received a small cut on his right hand. The bandit fled.

The grateful Vipul offered Vijan half of the wealth he had got. But Vijan politely refused the offer, saying that since he must die shortly, he had no need of money.

Vipul spent the wealth whimsically, eating, drinking and making merry in many wrong ways.

Another six months passed. There was no sign of a crown coming to Vipul nor of death coming to Vijan.

They waited for some more time. Then the two entered the

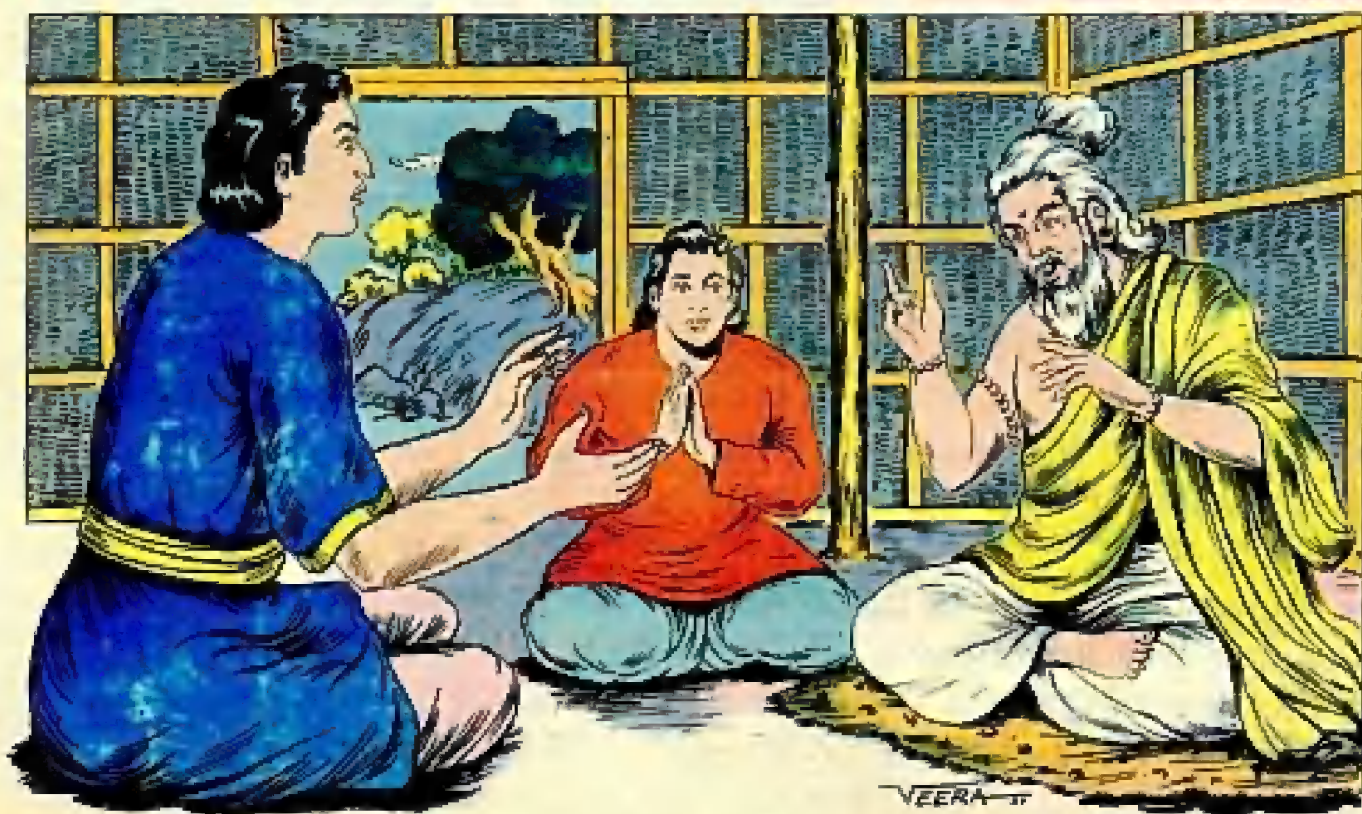
forest and located the hermit.

"Sir, how did your predictions go wrong?" they asked him.

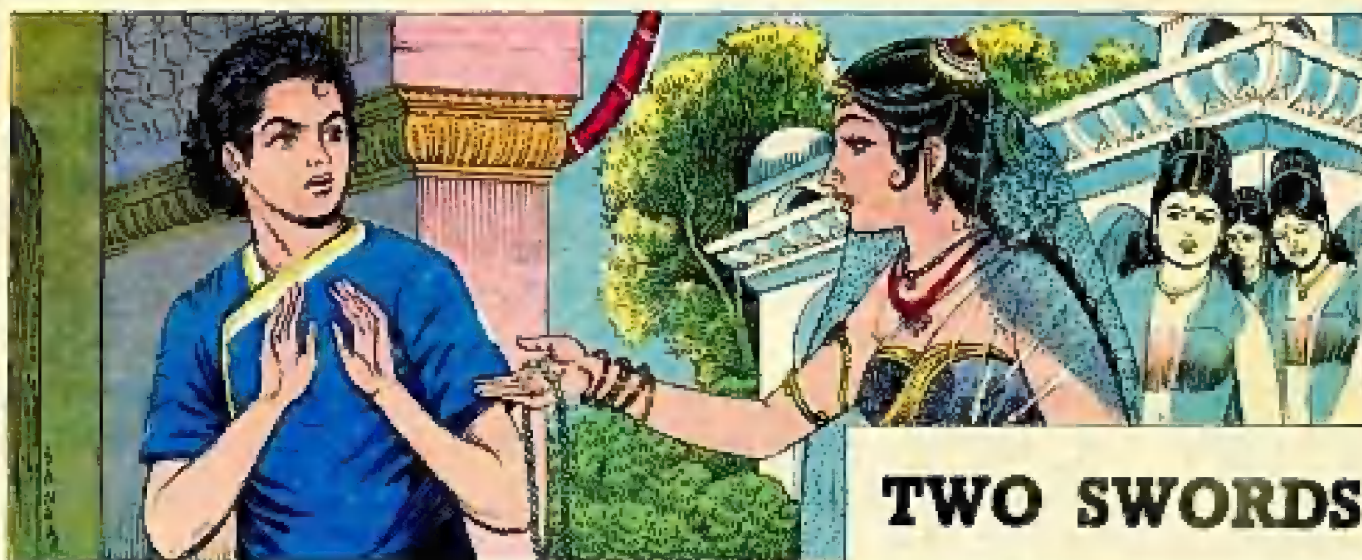
The hermit sat in meditation for a while. Then he told Vipul, "Your fate was changed because of your sinful actions. The crown that would have come to you was reduced to a potful of gold and silver which you found in the field."

Then turning to Vijan, he said, "Your prayers and good deeds changed your fate too. Death in the assassin's hand was reduced to your getting merely wounded by him."

The two friends returned silently.







## TWO SWORDS

**I**t was Princess Uditā's Swayamvaram. Her father, King Dhananjaya had sent forth invitations to all the eligible Princes of the neighbouring kingdoms and now they were all present.

The king and his queen Padmini were sitting at one end of the hall while a dozen young Princes sat opposite them, in a semi-circle. They looked handsome in their colourful dresses, and their smiles shone brighter than the diamond and ruby necklaces around their necks. Their eager eyes were fixed on Princess Uditā.

As the auspicious hour struck, the Princess got up from her seat, as bashful and beautiful as the garland in her hands. There was a flash of smiles on the faces of the Princes and their eyes sparkled with expectation

and their hearts throbbed.

Suddenly, all hearts started throbbed even more rapidly, but for a different reason. All eyes showed panic and all the bright smiles showed fear and horror! There was pandemonium in the big hall.

The king's elephant, Virat, which was all the while standing outside was suddenly seized by a 'must'—a temporary madness—and it charged into the hall, straight towards the Princes!

Trembling with terror, the Princes sought protection wherever they could: Some hid behind the pillars, some others jumped into the pool around a fountain and one of the Princes, the one with big moustaches and a big sword, jumped out of his shoes and scampered and hid behind Princess Uditā!

Hardly a minute had passed



when young Shashidhar jumped into the chaos and brought the rioting elephant under control. His fearlessness wrought a miracle as it were, and the elephant was guided out of the hall by the mahout who had come in by then.

The Princes came out of their hiding one by one and they left the place as it was announced that the Swayamvaram had been postponed.

Princess Udita took out her diamond necklace and offered it to Shashidhar saying, "I am very grateful to you for having saved our lives. Please accept this small token of our gratitude."

"It was but my duty to protect you; I've done no more than

that. Pardon me, but I cannot accept any reward," replied Shashidhar and he left the place.

The king too was very impressed by the bravery shown by the young man and on enquiry he found out that Shashidhar was the son of his own army chief. He decided to reward him amply at an appropriate time.

That night, when he was relaxing in his room, the Princess went to the king with two swords in her hand. One of them had a hilt studded with diamonds and its blade was shining like stars, but, it was not sharp. Its scabbard too was of the purest silver, with designs of gold laces. The second one was





most unimpressive—its hilt was of bronze while its blade looked dull, but, it was as sharp as a razor's edge. Its scabbard was a simple one made of leather, embroidered with silk threads.

"Father, which one of these two swords would you prefer in battle?" asked Princess Uditā, presenting the swords to King Dhananjaya.

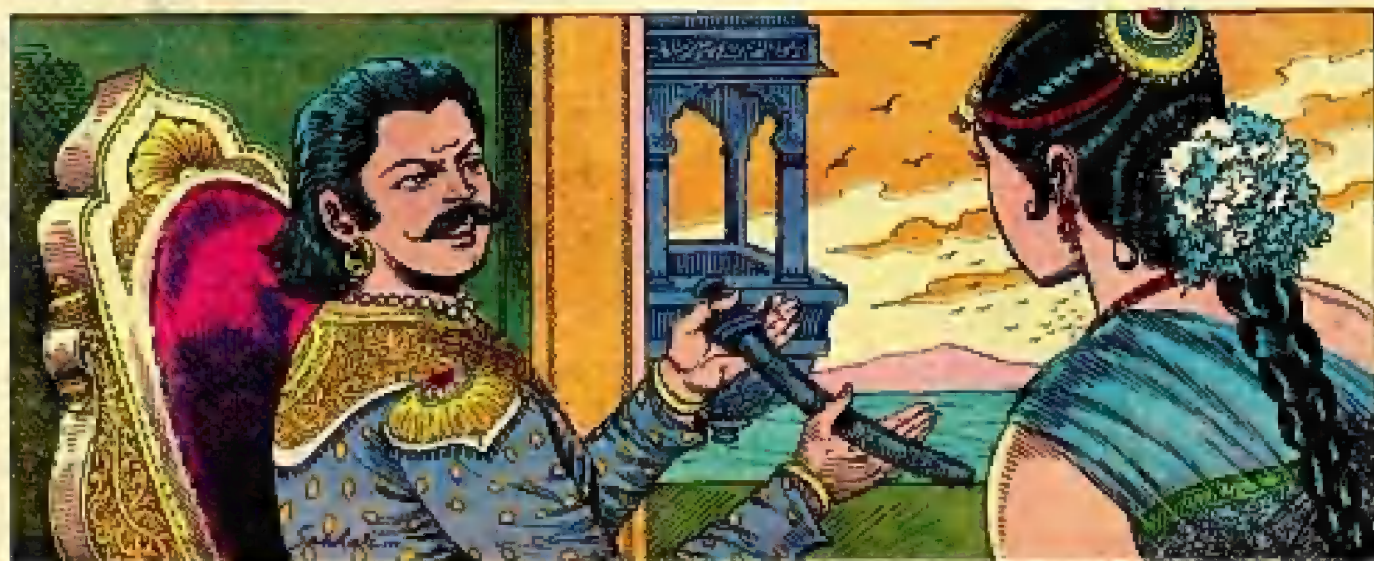
The king looked at both the swords, verified their quality and then replied, "My daughter dear, for a warrior what counts is the sharpness of the sword, not its decorations. I prefer therefore this one with a leather scabbard. The other one is only an ornament. It is of no use."

"Then, for my life's battle, why do you want to present me with an ornament? I've enough of them already," said the Princess, smilingly.

The king did not understand what his daughter was driving at. Seeing his puzzled look, the Princess explained:

"Man's wealth, his beauty, his pride and position are like this gold-laced scabbard. What is their use if the inside of a man, like the silver sword, is 'blunt', unheroic? What is required is the inner courage which can be of use when a crisis comes. All these Princes who had come for my Swayamvaram are like the silver sword, but, Shashidhar is like this sharp one."

King Dhananjaya appreciated much his daughter's thinking and also her feelings for Shashidhar. He did not hold a Swayamvaram again. Instead, he arranged Princess Uditā's marriage with Shashidhar the noble and brave son of his army chief.





# Spots Versus Stripes

**R**earing up on its hind legs, the zebra chopped down on its aggressors with flailing hooves. Undeterred the hyenas continued to press home their attack, accompanying this with their characteristic maniacal shrieks.

Intense hunger must have driven the hyenas to make this attack. Most of the time they are scavengers, content to eat what the lions have left. But at other times, when carrion is scarce, they have been known to compete with lions in the hunt for big game.

Hyenas are found in parts of Asia and Africa, although the spotted hyena shown in our picture lives in southern and eastern Africa, extending north to Ethiopia.

They are about the size of a large dog, but are related in structure to the cats and civets. Hyenas form a valuable service to the health of the communities they visit by eating dead animals and thus removing sources of disease.

Despite this liking for carrion, hyenas occasionally run in packs and will then attack large animals, as shown in our picture. In attacking zebras, they have little competition, for zebra meat is sweet and highly flavoured. Its taste does not appeal to man, and that is why the zebra has been hunted for its hide rather than its flesh. Lions—and, presumably, hyenas also—enjoy zebra meat, and it is said that lions would have starved in many parts of Africa if there had not been zebras.

The zebra is a member of the horse family and is closely related to the wild ass. Owing to the pursuit of hunters, it was fast being exterminated some years ago but is now protected. The species thus saved are the mountain zebra, a larger and very handsome animal, and the common or Burchell's zebras, which are of several varieties.

Made extinct by the hunter is the Quagga, a kind of zebra which was fairly common throughout South Africa, until white men killed it to provide food for their slaves and native workmen. If the meat's taste was not appealing it

was, apparently, the only alternative to a state of hunger.

### Good Camouflage

All these animals are horse-like grazers and go about in large herds, when their black and white stripes provide them with a good camouflage against the African background of blazing light and intensely black shadow. But when a startled herd gallops across the African bush, the whole scene becomes a sparkling one of intermingling black and white stripes.

As the herd moves, the air is filled with the zebras' yak-yaki-yaki-yak cry, which sounds like crying and has earned it the name of "weeping donkey".

Far from indicating sorrow, however, the call could be a warning to other members of the herd that danger is about, perhaps in the shape of a prowling hyena, hungry for the taste of zebra.











### *Unsolved Mysteries*

## RETURN OF THE DEAD

**A**n epidemic had gripped the small town near Wisconsin, U.S.A. and people died by the dozen. Five-year-old Max Hoffman also fell a victim to the epidemic and, within two days of catching the illness, was dead. He was buried in the town cemetery.

The following night, the boy's mother got up with a scream, trembling and perspiring. She asked her husband to go and dig out the coffin of their child. She had dreamt that Max had turned over in his coffin and was struggling to come out of it. He wanted to return to life!

Mr. Hoffman quietened his

wife, explaining to her that the dream was only the result of her emotional attachment to the lost child and nothing more. The totally shaken mother gave in unwillingly after a long explanation.

But, the harrowing dream returned the next night. Little Max had turned over to his right side and his right hand was resting under his cheek. He was exhausted; he had struggled to come out to the sunlight for two long nights and days.

Her frantic pleadings to exhume her son's coffin and to save little Max could not be ignored any longer. Mr. Hoffman called up two of his neighbours and went to the burial-ground.

In the thick of the night, they dug open the coffin of Max Hoffman. They found him in exactly the same position as his mother had dreamt—with his



right hand under his right cheek! However, there was no sign of any life in the little boy.

Mr. Hoffman galloped to the doctor's house, carrying his son. It was the same doctor who had pronounced Max to be dead. At first he refused to take up the case. But, by the pressure of the parents and the neighbours, he agreed to try to revive Max Hoffman, though he assured them that it would be not only futile, but also foolish.

Nevertheless, he took his work seriously once he had begun it. After an hour of prayers by his parents and the frantic

efforts of the doctor, Max gave the first sign of life within and slowly fluttered his eyelids.

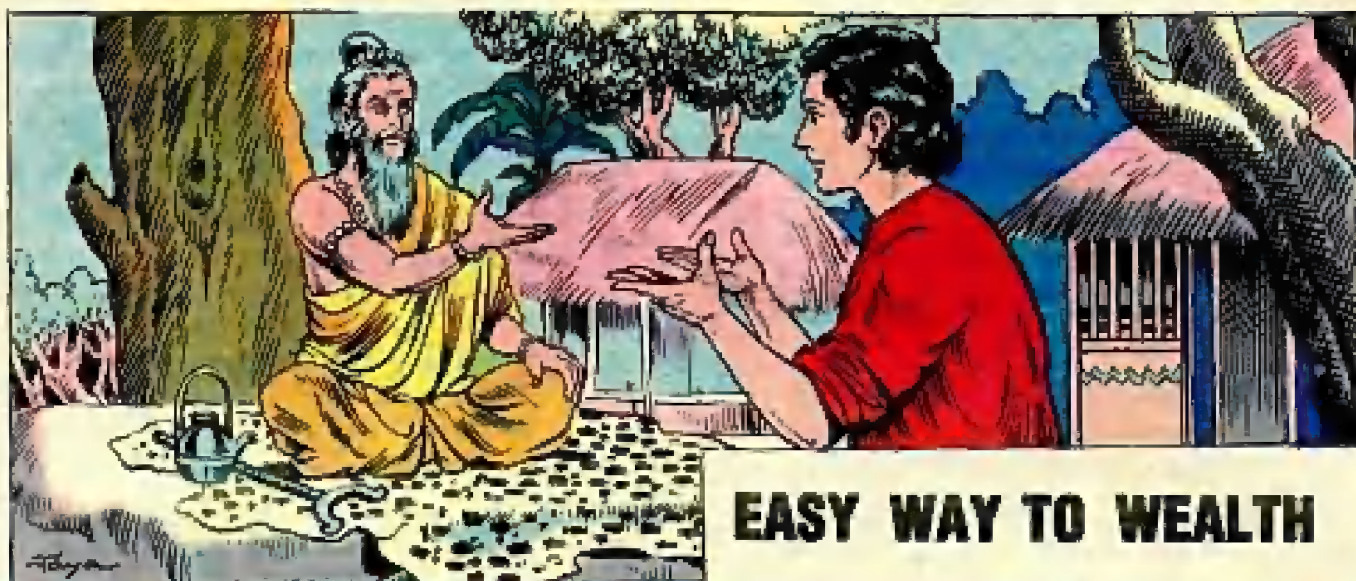
Every minute and every hour that passed by brought greater improvement in Max. Within a week's time he returned home and then lived on well into his eighties, at Clinton, Iowa.

Until his second death in his old age, he treasured the two metal handles of his coffin from which he had been rescued and had got his second birth.

Was it a rebirth in the same body or was it only a temporary death—if at all such a thing could be possible?







## EASY WAY TO WEALTH

**P**rasad was a young man of twenty three. He had a fine body—strong and beautiful. But just as an insect inside a golden mango eats it away slowly, and makes it uneatable, so Prasad's laziness corroded his body and mind and made him useless. All day long he went from one friend's house to another, ate at someone's house and slept late at night. Thus he spent an aimless life.

Soon his parents died one after another following an epidemic of a strange new disease in the village. Prasad became an orphan all on a sudden and he did not know what to do to keep himself going. He did not have any skill or art by which he could earn even a modest living.

Driven by circumstances, he went to the yogi who lived on

the banks of the river that flowed through his village. The yogi was in deep meditation when Prasad approached him. He waited a while.

When he opened his eyes, the yogi saw Prasad standing in front of him and he asked him: "Son, what is it that you want from me?"

Prasad bowed to the Yogi and narrated to him his life's story.

"I cannot give you money, but, I can give you a secret knowledge by which you will be able to see whatever is hidden under the ground. And this capacity will give you enough money for your living," said the yogi after hearing Prasad's sad story.

"A blind man asks for sight and a poor man asks for money. What can I want from you, Yogi Maharaj!" said Prasad in all



humility. "At the same time," warned the Yogi, "You should be very careful not to use the wealth that you find under the earth for yourself. Your secret knowledge should be used only for others' benefit. You'll lose the power if you use it for yourself."

Prasad looked at the Yogi with a question in his mind.

"Don't worry. When you help others, the others will help you," said the yogi.

Prasad thanked the Yogi and walked towards the neighbouring village. Soon, he came to a forest. As he was crossing it, he saw a group of travellers coming towards him. Suddenly, he saw something inside the ground and shouted alerting the travellers.

"Halt! There is danger in front of you!"

The travellers were surprised by this sudden warning and halted. They thought that there was a wild animal nearby and they panicked. But, Prasad explained:

"There is no wild animal nearby. The real danger is that there is a quicksand-mire right in front of you. If you had taken three more steps you would



have fallen into it."

The leader of the traveller's group did not quite believe Prasad. He asked skeptically, "You are bluffing us. Where is the quicksand? I see only hard ground and even some shrubs around me. Come on colleagues, let us go."

Saying so, he had hardly taken three steps forward when he fell into a quicksand-mine and immediately sank upto his waist.

"Help! Help! I'm sinking!" shouted the leader.

The others threw a long stick at him and with its help they managed to save their leader.



The travellers felt very grateful to Prasad for his timely help and gave him some money before proceeding on their journey.

Prasad felt happy to have got the test of his new powers and for his being able to help others.

When he reached the neighbouring village, he felt very thirsty and he went to a lonely hut to request for some water. As he neared the hut, he heard the wailing of a lady.

"It is now more than two days and you have hardly brought home any money. There is no food today—not even for the little one! O God, how long

shall we live in such poverty...."

Prasad felt very sad and went inside the hut in order to give the lady some consolation. As he went near the kitchen he saw something remarkable under the ground. He stood dumb for a second and then he exclaimed:

"What wealth! What gold! Who said you are poor? Dig here and you'll get a pot full of gold coins!"

The poor man and the wife thought that Prasad was telling all those things only to make them happy for a while. When Prasad told them all about his strange powers, they believed him. They started digging in the





kitchen floor and hardly had they dug for two feet, when they hit upon a pot full of gold coins. The lady almost went mad with joy. The man danced like one possessed. After a while, they quietened down and thanked Prasad, saying, "You have been sent by God Himself. Without your coming we would have taken to begging." They then gave a few gold coins to Prasad and he bade them a hearty goodbye.

As Prasad strolled around in the village, he hit upon another treasure trove in one of the fields. On enquiry he found out that the field belonged to two brothers, Rajan and Ranga. The brothers were quite poor as such, but, they were known to be the best of brothers in the whole village. They loved each other very much, they shared all their wealth and they lived in perfect harmony. So, Prasad thought of helping them with his discovery and told about it to Ranga, as the elder brother Rajan was not at home.

The idea of having a whole treasure to himself was too tempting to be shared with his brother. So, Ranga went alone at night and started digging at



the spot that was previously shown by Prasad.

Rajan had noticed a strangeness in his brother's behaviour that day. So, he had kept a close watch on his brother and at night he had followed Ranga to the field.

When the jar of jewellery was unearthed by Ranga, Rajan came out of his hiding and demanded his share. Soon, the brothers were fighting over the treasure and the fight ended in both the brothers becoming unconscious and a passerby stealing the jewellery!

Next day when Prasad came





to know of the incident, he cursed himself, for he felt himself responsible for it. He decided that thereafter he would not help others and that he would not earn his living by this easy method. Easy money is a curse on every one—he thought.

So, the next time when he came upon some wealth he took

it for himself and thereby willingly lost all his extraordinary powers. With that wealth he established a business and by sheer hard work he earned a good living and within a few years he became rich. He realised that there is no alternative to hard work, which brings not only money but also peace and satisfaction in one's life.

## SPOT THE TEN DIFFERENCES







*New Tales of King  
Vikram and the Vampire*

## **NO ADMISSION!**

**D**ark was the night and weird the atmosphere. It rained from time to time. At the intervals of thunderclaps could be heard the moaning of jackals and eerie laughter of spirits. Flashes of lightning showed fearful faces.

But King Vikram swerved not. He climbed the ancient tree once again and brought the corpse down. However, no sooner had he begun crossing the desolate cremation ground with the corpse lying on his shoulder, than the vampire that possessed the corpse said, "O King, what is the purpose of your taking such troubles at this dead of night? Are you sure that you will not give up your efforts at the last moment? There are instances of people forgetting their goal just when it is within their reach. Let me cite an example to you. Pay attention to my narration. That might bring you some relief."





The vampire went on: Ramachandra of Shripur was a respectable and well-to-do villager. His wife died leaving one child behind—a boy named Sudarshan.

Ramachandra took great care to bring up the child properly. He followed such ideals which he expected his son to follow. He never uttered a lie. He refrained from any habit that he did not consider healthy for Sudarshan. With great patience he explained to Sudarshan all matters in which the boy showed some curiosity.

Sudarshan went to school. He learnt his lessons with attention

and retained them in his memory. He proved himself intelligent and sweet-natured. He was kind towards his playmates. If any of them was rude to him, he did not retort, but kept quiet.

When Sudarshan finished his study in the village school, Ramachandra decided to admit him in a famous school in the town, known as the Model Academy. This school was founded by a great educationist, Acharya Vijay Dev. The Acharya was no more, but his sons and grandsons ran the Academy. So great was the reputation of the institution that any student who studied there to the end was assured of high posts in the royal service.

Ramachandra had deep reverence for Vijay Dev. He resolved to donate five thousand rupees to the institution. He collected the necessary amount and got ready to set out for the town, with Sudarshan.

But, as fate would have it, he suddenly took ill.

Their journey was postponed. Ramachandra hoped that he will recover from his illness soon. But days passed and his condition turned worse. Even the foremost physician of the



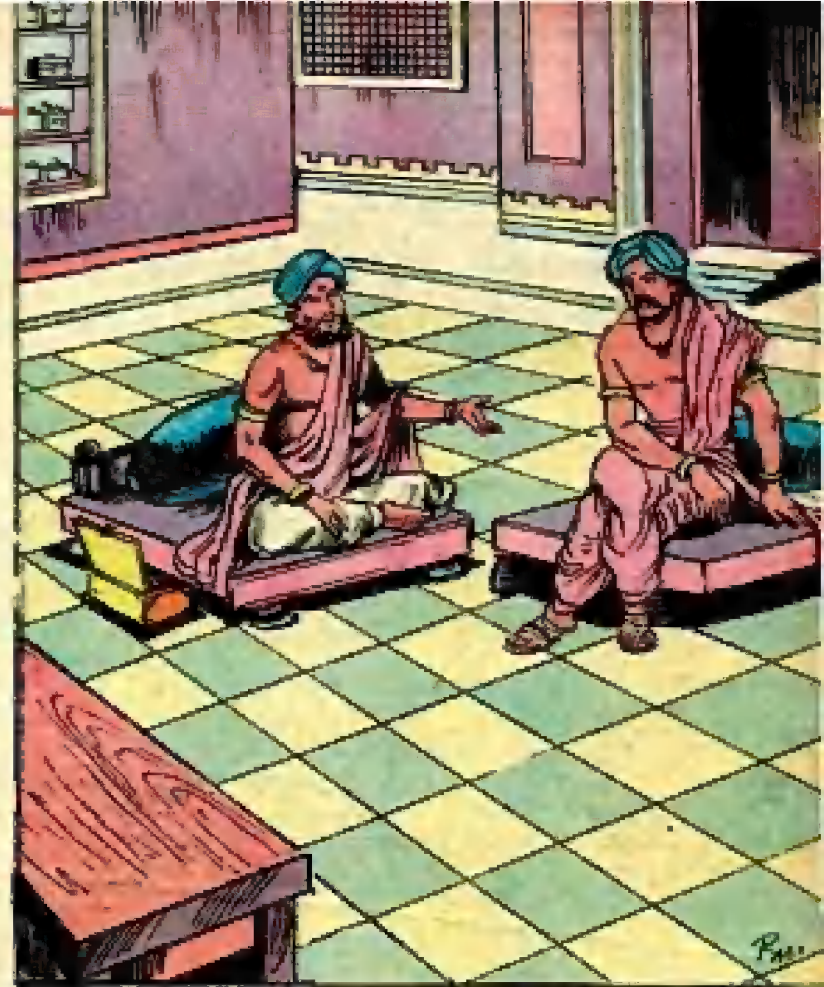
region failed to cure him.

The physician called his teacher, an old man who had retired to a hermitage. This old physician too did his best; even then there was no improvement in Ramachandra's condition.

Ramachandra felt extremely depressed. His dream of getting his son admitted in the Model Academy got shattered. Sudarshan, of course, was continuously attending upon him and was consoling him, but he remained sad.

There was a successful merchant in the village who visited Ramachandra often. He sat by his bedside and spoke to him of the principles of commerce. Sudarshan put questions to him. In the process he learnt a lot about commerce.

"Your son should study commerce," the merchant told Ramachandra. Among Ramachandra's well-wishers was a musician. The musician visited his sick friend from time to time and sang for the patient's benefit. "Why don't you learn to sing from my friend?" Ramachandra asked Sudarshan. Sudarshan was ready to do his father's bidding. He picked up the art of singing very fast.



"If you admit Sudarshan to the Model Academy, let him learn music there," the musician suggested to Ramachandra.

Meanwhile Sudarshan was listening with great interest to the discussion between the two physicians. They had diagnosed Ramachandra's disease to be a rare one. They prepared medicine according to the prescription in an old book. But the medicine did not work. One day Sudarshan politely asked them, "Could it be that in this context the prescription refers to Neem leaves?"

The surprised physicians read the old text once again and



realised that what Sudarshan said was true. They had failed to understand the old text properly. Now they prepared the medicine accordingly.

Ramachandra showed signs of improvement overnight. The fact that his son had hit upon the right medicine gave him great satisfaction. That speeded up his process of recovery. He got back his health in a month.

"Rama, you must train your son to become a physician. My cousin, Sumath, is the head of the department of Ayurveda at the Model Academy. I can write to him recommending Sudarshan," the elder physician told

Ramachandra.

At last Ramachandra and Sudarshan were ready to proceed to the town. The headmaster of the village school who came to see them off, said, "Ramachandra, Sudarshan ought to study literature. That is the subject in which he can show his merit. My brother-in-law, Dinanath, is in charge of the faculty of literature of the Academy. He will help you."

Father and son reached the town in the evening and spent the night in an inn. In the morning they met Sumath. "I'll like my son to study medicine," Ramachandra told him.





"Are you a physician yourself?" asked Sumath.

"No," replied Ramachandra.

"Was your father a physician?"

"No."

"Your grandfather?"

"I'm afraid, no!"

Sumath's lips got curled in derision. "How do you expect your son to fit into our section when none of his forefathers was a physician? Don't be so ambitious. Go and enrol him for commerce. He can earn his livelihood through some business."

They went to the gentleman in charge of the commerce department. He said sternly, "A

boy born and brought up in a village should not aspire to study commerce. It is different with town boys. They are exposed to a commercial atmosphere!"

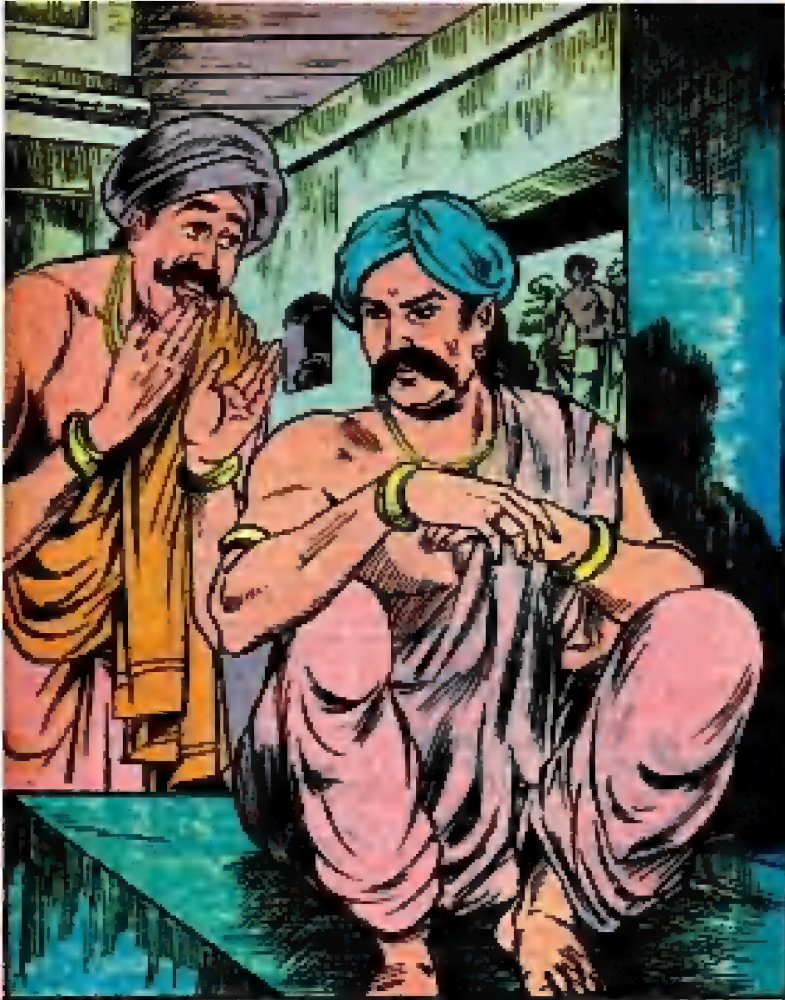
They went to the gentleman in charge of the music section. "Music is not literature that anybody can learn it!" commented the man. Then he hummed a song without paying any more attention to the visitors.

Ramachandra and Sudarshan then went to Dinanath. Since he was a relation of their village headmaster, they told him all about their experience.

"Those who come to study







literature because they find no place in any other section, have no place in our section either. You should have met me first if you were truly interested in literature!" said Dinanath.

They were tired. They returned to their inn.

On hearing everything from Ramachandra, the inn-keeper said to him, "All you have to do is contribute five hundred or a thousand rupees to the management. They will straightway admit the boy to any department of your choice. Tell me if you are prepared to make the contribution. I will get the boy admitted in no time."

Ramachandra nodded, but said nothing.

In the morning he and Sudarshan got ready to leave for their home.

"Can't you afford five hundred or a thousand rupees?" asked the inn-keeper.

"No," said Ramachandra.

"Don't you know that a student of the Model Academy can get any good job?"

Ramachandra kept quiet. Then both father and son left for their village.

The vampire paused for a moment and then asked King Vikram in a challenging tone, "O King, we know that Ramachandra was prepared to donate five thousand rupees for the institution. Why then did he back out? Why did he deprive Sudarshan of higher education? Answer me, if you can. Should you keep mum despite your knowledge of the answer, your head would roll off your neck!"

Forthwith answered King Vikram, "Ramachandra was willing to donate five thousand rupees out of his free will. He was not ready to give even one rupee out of compulsion. His respect for the Model Academy was gone when he found that





nobody was willing to examine the merit of the candidate. Their judgment was whimsical."

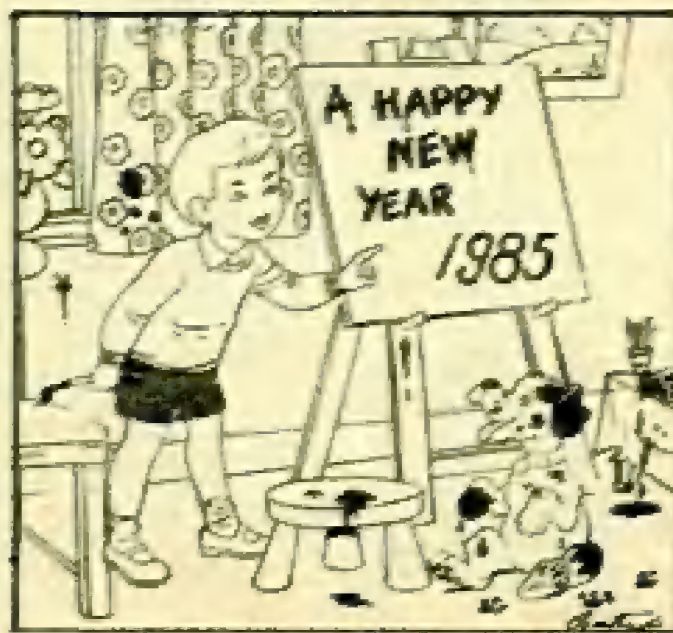
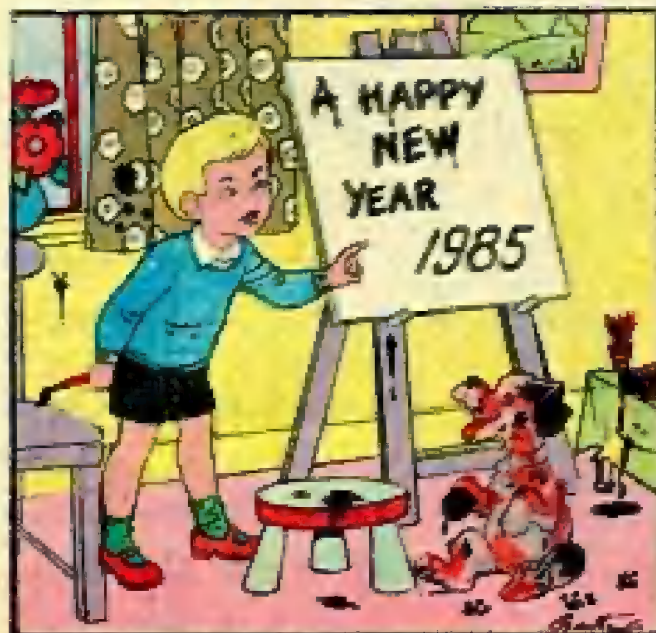
"Ramachandra had no intention of securing a good job for his son. What he wanted was true education for the boy. He realised that the Model Academy was no longer the ideal institution for education, though it was good for making a

career.

"Sudarshan had a knack for learning things spontaneously. One who had that quality, the whole world could become the school for him. So, Sudarshan had no need for admission into the Academy."

No sooner had the king concluded his answer than the vampire gave him the slip.

## WONDER WITH COLOURS





# THE GIANT AND THE PILGRIMS

Some pilgrims were heading towards Varanasi. Feeling tired, they sat down under a tree.

It was a lonely place. Suddenly a giant sprang up before them. "You are pilgrims, are you? You must be full of compassion for one another. Let me see. One of you must volunteer to come forward to be eaten up by me. If nobody comes forward, I'll eat all of you!"

Each one thought that someone else would volunteer to die. Nobody came forward.

"I'll eat all of you, one by one," announced the giant. At once everybody began to cry and whimper.

One member of the party, Sushil, who had been left behind, reached there just then. He learnt what the situation is. He came closer to the giant and said, "Here I am. You may eat me and spare the rest."

The giant caught hold of him and lifted him up, but said, "My brave friend, you are really noble. For your sake, I'll not harm anybody!" He then left Sushil and went away, laughing loudly.







## RIVERS OF INDIA

### Birth of Saraswati

Sage Gautama had three sons, Ekata, Dvita and Trita. The youngest, Trita, proved a brilliant scholar. He was admired by all the sages of the forest.

When the three brothers grew up to be young men, they went out into distant villages to meet the disciples of their father. The disciples were very happy to see the young men. They were, of course, most impressed with Trita.



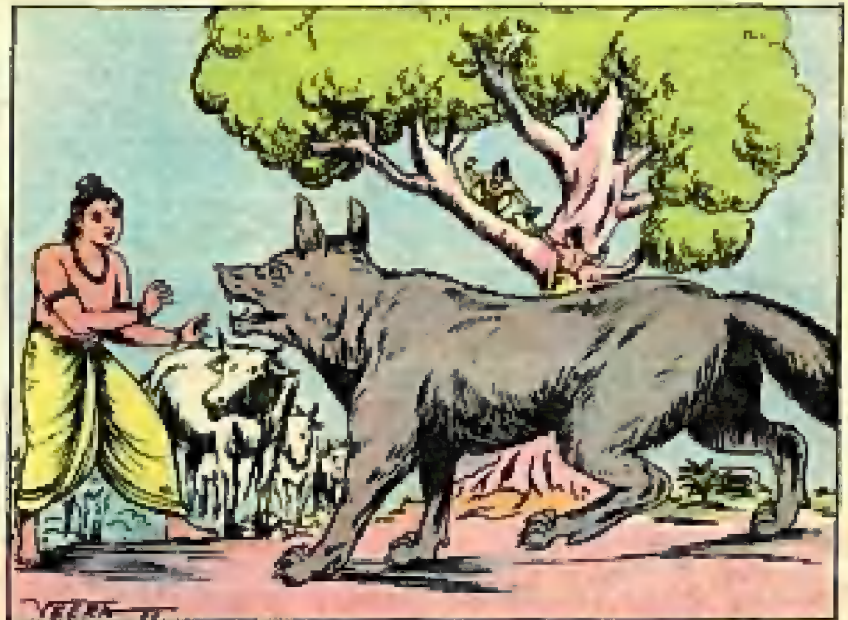
After a few days they began their journey back to their hermitage, rich with gifts of gold and cattle. They were eager to reach the hermitage on time for performing a Yajna at an auspicious hour.





Ekata and Dvita were jealous of Trita. They conspired between them how to deprive Trita of his share of the wealth. Trita walked ahead of them absorbed in his thoughts, ignorant of the motive of his elder brothers.

Ekata and Dvita observed a wolf peeping from a shrub. The beast was nearer Trita, but Trita could not notice it. The two brothers, instead of warning Trita about the danger, climbed a tree for their safety.



When Trita woke up to the approaching wolf and tried to flee, he fell into a deep pit. The wolf circled the mouth of the pit for a while and then left the place. Trita called out for his brothers, but to no avail.



After the wolf left the place, Ekata and Dvita climbed down the tree and led the cattle away. They also took away the bag Trita had thrown on the ground. They paid no heed to Trita's cry.



Trita felt extremely disappointed when the auspicious hour for the Yajna came. But soon he resolved to perform the Yajna inside the pit itself, in whatever way he could. He imagined the grass as fire and sprinkled water on it imagining it to be ghee and recited the hymns.

His brothers reached a valley and collected all the materials for the Yajna and performed it. But there was no result, for they had no devotion in them, nor could they recite the hymns properly. Their efforts went in vain.







Gods appeared before Trita, pleased with his Yajna, inside the pit. They offered him boons. He prayed to be rescued and, what is more, also prayed that the water of the pit be sacred, worthy of being offered to Gods.

The gods granted Trita his boons. Surging water lifted him out of the pit. The water then flowed on as a river. The curse of the gods reduced Trita's treacherous brothers to pig-like creatures.



The river became famous as Saraswati, the glory of which was sung by the Vedic seers. The Saraswati, in course of time, has gone underground. At Prayag near Allahabad it meets the Ganga and the Yamuna, though it is not visible.





## CLUE TO HAPPINESS

**S**antosh was a young lad of sixteen years. He was a bright boy, courageous and strong. But he seemed to be always depressed, for no apparent reason. Therefore, he had no friends and he used to go to the village lake and spend his time on its bank.

In the same village lived Ratangupta, a wealthy landlord. He had been once cheated by Kanaklal, another landlord of the neighbouring village. Since then, they had become sworn enemies.

One day, as Santosh sat beside the lake, he suddenly heard loud cries. He looked behind him and saw the four-year old son of Ratangupta being forcefully taken away by a ruffian. He guessed that it must be

Kanaklal's man who was trying to kidnap the child. He gave the ruffian a chase, caught him up and bashed him. The ruffian left the child and ran for his life.

Ratangupta was very grateful to Santosh for saving his son. He gave him a gold coin as reward.

Santosh did not know what to do with the coin. He knew he could not have hidden it in his dilapidated hut where there was no safety. He decided to bury it near the lake. As a mark of recognition, he planted a creeper near the spot.

As time passed, the rivalry between the two landlords increased involving the security of the village people. One day, the king of the land decided to come to the village of Ratangupta and



to settle the problem himself.

Santosh was asked to look after the personal needs of the king while he was in the village. He served the king with great love and care.

The king was pleased with Santosh's service and decided to reward him before returning to his palace.

"Santosh, I am indeed glad with your devoted service," said the king. "I want to reward you for it. Tell me frankly, what you would like to have."

Santosh thought for a while and then asked innocently:

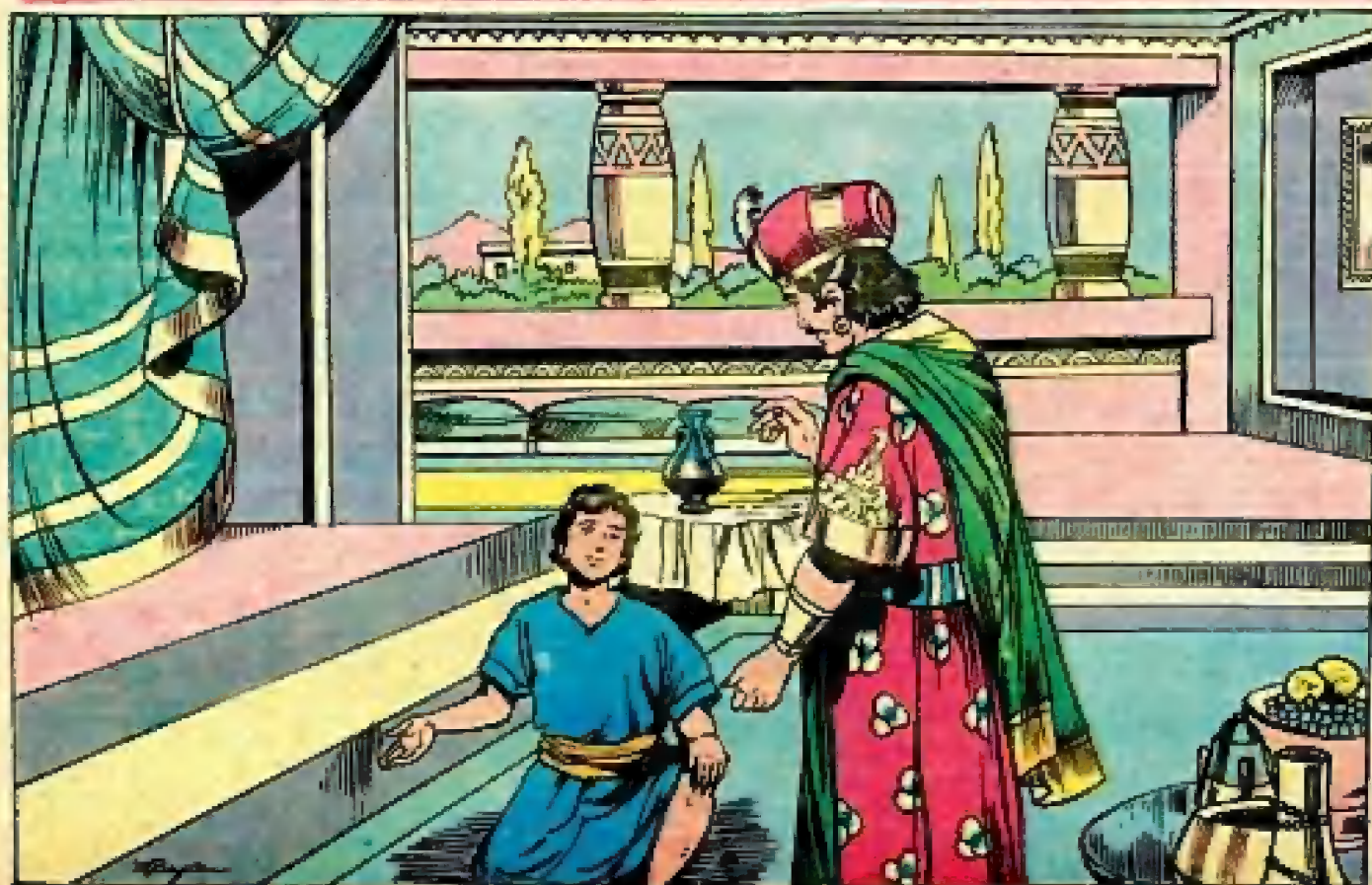
"Maharaj, I seem to be always sad and dejected. Could

you give me some medicine to make me cheerful and happy?"

The king laughed. He then said, "I have no particular medicine for making people joyous! But, I could help you to become sunny and sprightly by offering you the best entertainment of my palace. Are you ready to come with me?"

Santosh jumped at the offer and replied gleefully, "Of course I will come! It will be my great fortune to be your guest!"

That afternoon Santosh was day-dreaming. He had started imagining about the pleasures of the palace. He thought that he must take his gold coin before





leaving for the king's place. So, he ran to the lake, and searched for the creeper near which he had hidden his coin.

But, he could not locate the plant. Perhaps a goat had eaten it up. Santosh searched all over the place, but he could not find either the creeper or the coin.

Disappointment was writ large on his face when the king saw him that evening.

"What's happened to you, Santosh? Why do you look so gloomy?" asked the king.

"I've lost my money. I'd kept it buried near the lake and now I can't find it," replied Santosh in a sad tone.

"How much money was it?" asked the king.

Santosh thought that if he told the truth, he would be laughed at, because he was being downcast on losing one single gold coin. So, he replied, "I've lost one hundred gold coins!"

"Do not worry," replied the king. "I have special powers with which I can locate any wealth hidden underground. Come early in the morning, tomorrow."

The king knew very well that Santosh could not have had all



that money and that he was not telling the truth. Yet, as he had promised to help him, he asked his guards to bury after dark one hundred gold coins on the banks of the lake.

Next morning, Santosh went to the lake along with the king. The king showed him a particular spot and asked Santosh to dig there. The young lad was surprised to find a bagful of gold coins.

"Count and see if they are hundred," said the king.

Santosh fell at the king's feet and pleaded for mercy for having told him a lie.

"It is all right. Now that you



have found it, you can take the treasure," suggested the king.

"No, Maharaj, I cannot do that. If I feel so cheerless on losing only one gold coin, how woeful that man must be who has lost a hundred gold coins! Pardon me, Maharaj, I cannot take them," replied Santosh in all sincerity.

The king felt happy with the honesty of the boy and said:

"Do not worry, it is my money. I'd got it buried here last night. Now you can take it as a gift from me," said the king.

Santosh accepted the reward gladly.

Next day, the king was preparing to leave the village and to return to his court. Santosh met him but he was once again with a sullen face.

"My dear boy, I'm surprised to see you all dejected once

again. What's the cause?" asked the king.

"Maharaj, I'm still feeling sour about my gold coin which I'd earned myself! Will it never be found?"

"Santosh, if a hundred gold coins cannot make you contented how can you hope to be joyful with one single coin even if you found it. Your melancholic moods are not due to anything external. You have to change your attitude towards life. You have to decide to be mirthfull. Only then can you be satisfied with the things around you. Happiness is something internal—it will not come with one or a hundred gold coins," advised the king and he boarded his royal palanquin.

Santosh returned to the lakeside and sat on a stone brooding over what the king had told him.







## THE SEAT OF JUSTICE

**H**undreds of years ago there was a king called Sudhir Chandra who ruled over Sahapur. He was very particular about rendering full justice to his people, but, he realised that it was very difficult to get the truth out of the culprits of crime. So, one day he asked his Guru:

"Guru Maharaj, what methods should I adopt in order to get the truth out of people, so that, proper judgment could be rendered to all?"

"It would be best to pray for the grace of the Goddess of justice," advised the Guru.

Accordingly, King Sudhir Chandra did penance for several years. One day, the deity appeared before him and said:

"I'm pleased with your penance and devotion. What boon can you want from me, O

Sudhir Chandra?"

"Grant me a special Seat of Justice, standing on which no one can ever tell a lie. And, if any one tells a lie, she or he shall fall unconscious for a while," asked the king.

"That is not right, my boy. The Almighty has given you intelligence and wisdom. You must apply them to know the truth," said the goddess.

But the king insisted on having an easy way to knowing the truth.

"Let it be so," said the deity, and vanished.

There materialised beside the king a beautiful golden seat and the king had it carried to his court. Soon word spread around about the magic Seat of Justice and people from all over the kingdom came to have a look at it. There were of course a few





who had suspected its power, but were soon convinced when they got proofs of it.

The king felt very proud and self-confident. He told his minister one day, "Thanks to this Seat of Justice, I'll be always right in my decisions. History shall remember me as the greatest and the wisest king!"

The minister replied, "I am aware of the greatness of this Gift from the Goddess. Yet, I'm not sure if man won't be able to find some way to cheat us!"

"How dare you insult my faith in the Seat of Justice? If you can, prove to me that one can tell a lie standing on it and not

be caught! I give you a week's time. If you fail, you'll have to pay with your head for your doubts," said the king, twisting his stout moustaches.

That very afternoon, the minister disguised himself as a yogi and settled himself near the house of Vicheta, a renowned beauty of the kingdom. She was so proud of her beauty that she thought herself to be more beautiful than the nymphs! She even talked about it to everyone around, for she was indeed a great chatterer too. And the minister had decided to teach her also a lesson and peel off some of her self-pride.

As he sat there, people flocked to him. Soon they found out what a strange power the yogi had. You give him a coin and he will return you two coins! Overnight he became popular in the area.

On the night of the fourth day, Vicheta too came to the yogi, bringing with her all her gold ornaments and jewellery. She had calculated that by offering all her wealth, she would become doubly rich. She was clever and shrewd too, apart from being a beautiful chatterer!



The yogi received the gifts and told Vicheta to meet him the next morning. Being cautious, she posted a few guards to keep watch over the yogi through the night.

Next morning, when she returned to the yogi and asked for her gold ornaments, the yogi replied, "What ornaments? You haven't given me anything!"

Vicheta was shocked at first and then, bursting with anger, created a big scene. Soon it was decided that the yogi should be taken to the king's court.

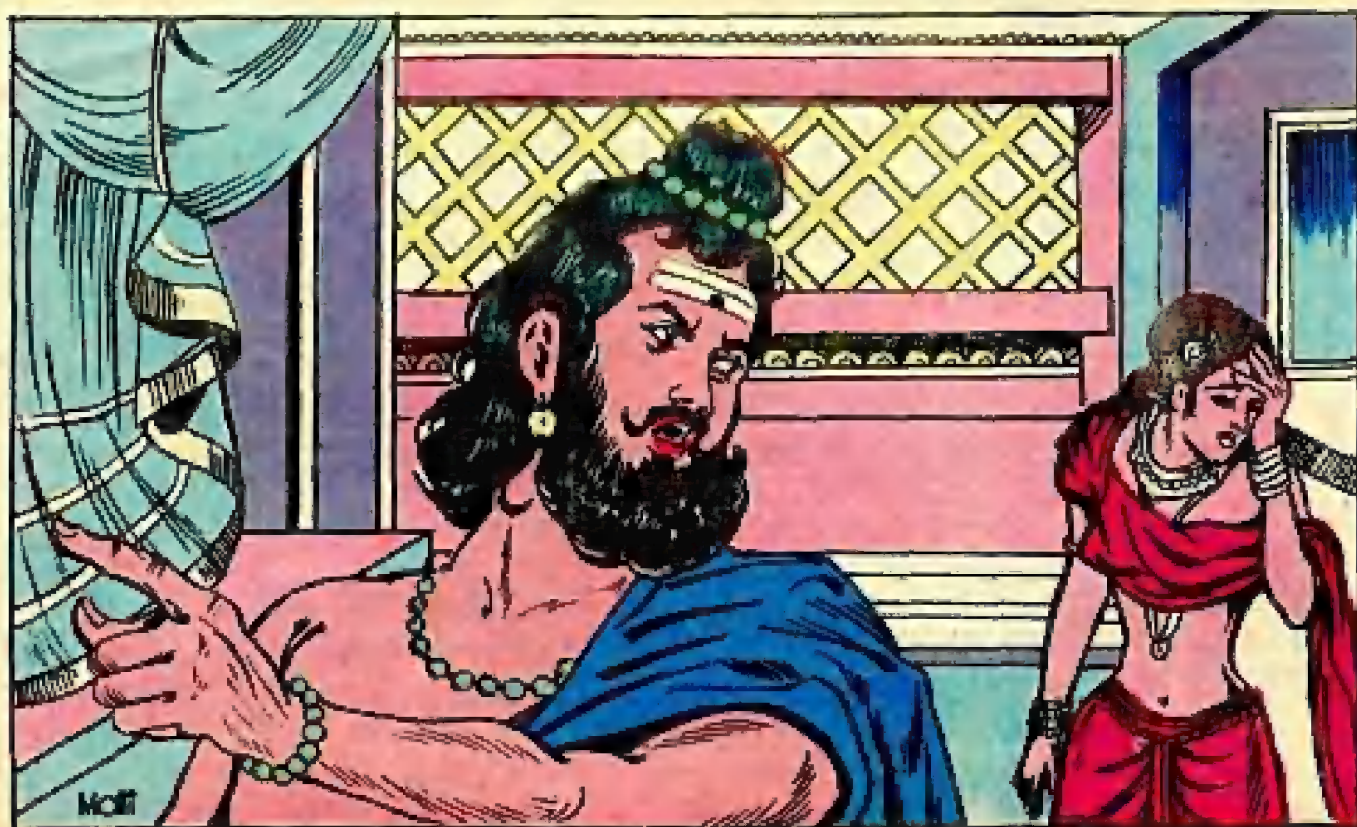
At the court, King Sudhir Chandra heard the case and then asked the yogi to stand on

the Seat of Justice and to declare his innocence. The yogi asked Vicheta to hold his stick and then standing up on the seat, declared:

"I do not have even a single gram of Vicheta's wealth." So saying, he got off the seat.

Vicheta became furious at this outrageous lie and she stood up on the Seat of Justice and shouted at the yogi saying, "You liar! How do you deny that my gold and jewellery are with you?"

Hardly had she completed the sentence when she fell on the ground, unconscious. Everyone in the court laughed at Vicheta







and the king waited for Vicheta to regain consciousness.

After a few minutes, Vicheta became conscious and she stood up, crying at her misfortune.

At that moment, the yogi took off his disguise and the king saw with great surprise that he was his own minister. Puzzled, he asked him, "Why all this drama?"

"Maharaj, I've proved to you that one can cheat the Seat of Justice in which you had blind faith," said the minister with a twinkle in his eyes.

"How?" asked the king.

"The wealth that was given to me by Vicheta is hidden in that

stick which I handed over to her before climbing on the Seat. So, when I declared that I did not possess her wealth, I was not telling a lie and yet it was not the truth. But, Vicheta, not knowing that she held her wealth in her own hands, told the truth, and yet it was a lie!"

The king sat speechless.

"So, Maharaj, man is extremely cunning. He can often give a convenient twist to truth. So, do not have such a blind faith in the Seat of Justice."

The king was now enlightened. He understood why the goddess herself was reluctant to grant him what he wanted.

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## The Villain's Way with The Bucket

Grandpa Chowdhury, Reena and Rajesh returned from a party.

"Grandpa, when Uncle Ajay said that the villain in the novel kicked the bucket, you all laughed. What is so funny about kicking a bucket?" asked a puzzled Rajesh.

"Good Lord! Rajesh, you seemed to have dozed off in the party. You surely haven't heard Uncle Ajay from the beginning," said an amused Grandpa. "'Kicking the bucket', though a slang, is only an euphemism for telling that someone is dead," explained Grandpa.

"What is an eu-phe-mism, Grandpa?" asked Reena trying to catch the correct pronunciation of the word.

"Euphemism is an indirect word or phrase used in place of one that is more direct or harsh or unpleasant," explained Prof. Chowdhury. "It is an old practice. Even in the 1st century A.D. the Greek historian Plutarch wrote that the Athenians, centuries before him, referred to taxes as 'contributions' and to the prison as 'chamber'.

"Now I know why Uncle Ajay used the phrase, 'pass away' when he spoke of the leader's death. Surely he wanted to show him reverence," commented Rajesh.

"You're right, Rajesh. The word 'death' has many euphemisms. For example, we say, 'she lost her husband,' 'if anything should happen to me,' 'the departed,' 'laid to rest,' etc." Grandpa elaborated.

"It is very interesting, this use of euphemism," said Reena more confident of her knowledge now.

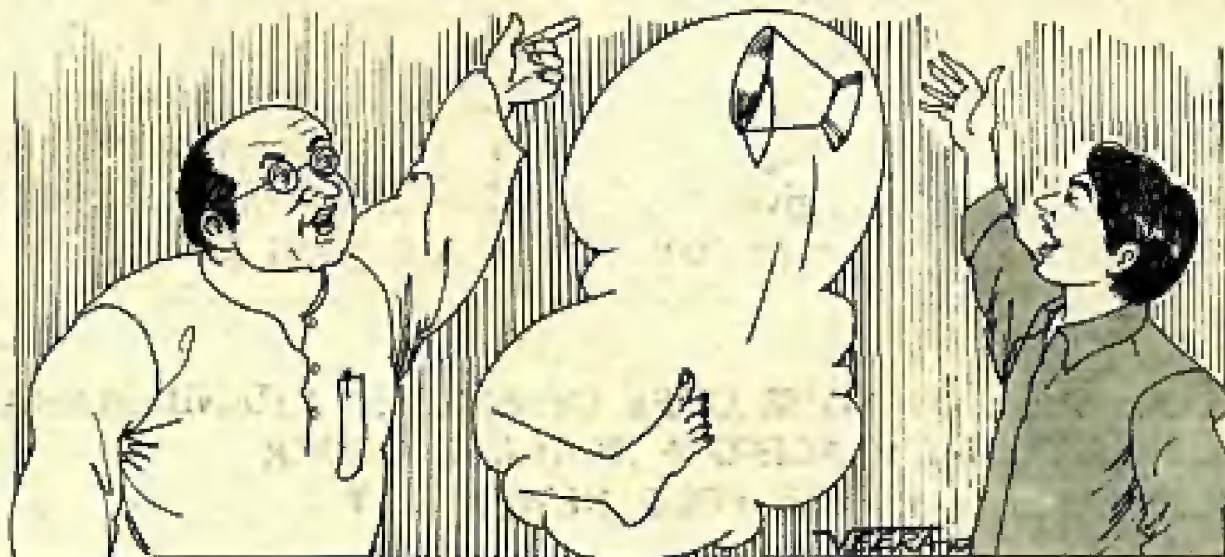
"But, when an euphemism is used for some time, it becomes simply another usual expression. For example, the word, 'misrepresentation' is no more an euphemism of 'lie', as it used to be till few years ago," clarified Prof. Chowdhury.

"Thank you, Grandpa. We ran too long in the sports ground today. My legs are aching. I must lie down," said Rajesh.

"Do so, boy, since you are not in Victorian England," observed Grandpa.

"What was wrong with Victorian England?"

"For them leg was vulgar! Even their pianos had 'limbs' and not legs. They made a parody of the principle of euphemism," said Grandpa.







The earth weighs 6,588,000,000,000,000,000,000 tons.

## Do You Know?



Stamp collecting is the most popular hobby in the world.



E is the most frequently used letter in the English alphabet; Q is the least.

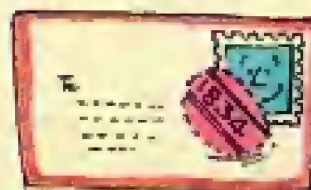
In the Middle Ages, in Europe, animals and birds were tried in the court for "crimes", mostly for sorcery. The last such recorded trial took place in 1740 when a French judge found a cow guilty of sorcery and ordered it to be hanged to death.



In one day a full-grown oak tree emits 7 tons of water through its leaves.



*The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* by Mark Twain was the first ever novel to be written on a typewriter.



The postage stamp was invented by James Chambers, an Englishman, in 1834. Before-hand envelopes had stamps engraved on them.



The scissors were invented by the great genius, Leonardo da Vinci.







# PHOTO CAPTION CONTEST



Pranlal K. Patel



Anant Desai

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## PICKS FROM THE WISE

*An expert is one who knows more and more about less and less.*

—Nicholas Murray Butler.

*Among the blind, the one-eyed man is king.*

—Anonymous.

*Children have more need of models than of critics.*

—Joubert.



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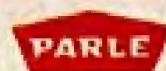


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